



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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## **Gov. Schwarzenegger Reminds Californians to Buckle Up, Awards Traffic Safety Grants**

Reminding motorists to buckle up for safety, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today announced the award of traffic safety grants to enforce California's seat belt laws. The grants, totaling \$5.7 million to 270 police departments statewide, will be used during the upcoming "Click It or Ticket" mobilization, taking place May 14 - June 3.

"It takes a mere two seconds to buckle a seat belt - those two seconds could literally save a life," said Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. "I am asking all drivers and passengers to buckle up on every single trip, no matter how short or close to home. It's a matter of life and death."

California currently has a seat belt use rate of 93.4 percent. Since California launched the "Click It or Ticket" campaign in May 2005, nearly one million more California motorists are buckling up. In 2005, about half, 352, of the 705 unrestrained fatalities would be alive today had they simply buckled up.

"In addition to targeting those that still aren't wearing seat belts, it's critical that we make an effort to connect with young people, particularly high school students," said Office of Traffic Safety Director Christopher J. Murphy. "Our teen seat belt use rate is only 90.8 percent - well below the rate of adults. That has got to change or more and more young lives will be lost."

"Click it or Ticket" is timed to coincide with the beginning of the heavy summer travel period, kicking off with Memorial Day weekend and graduation season later this month when many families hit the road for vacation.

"The public should be aware that officers will be actively issuing citations for seat belt violations," said Mike Brown, Commissioner of the California Highway Patrol. "There will be no warnings or second chances and penalties will be stiff, particularly for failing to properly restrain children."

The fine for failing to properly buckle up any child under age 6 ranges from \$330 to \$401 for a first offense, including fines, penalties and assessments, and between \$795 to \$971 on a second offense. The driver gets the ticket if the parent is not in the car. The fine for unbuckled vehicle occupants over the age of 16 is \$80 to \$91, depending upon the jurisdiction.

Four traffic-safety related departments within the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency are combining resources in connection with "Click It or Ticket." The CHP will lead the stepped-up enforcement effort of safety laws to save lives. With support from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the California Office of Traffic Safety will fund the law enforcement operations by distributing \$5.7 million in seat belt grants to 272 law enforcement agencies in California. Grant funding will go toward paying for officer overtime in connection with the mobilization. Changeable

Message Signs operated by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) will carry “Click It or Ticket” messaging during the campaign, as will LED screens in various field offices operated by the Department of Motor Vehicles.

For a list of participating law enforcement agencies, visit [www.ots.ca.gov](http://www.ots.ca.gov).

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